

## **THE AMERICAN VETERAN**

### **EPISODE 9**

#### **PART 3**

BENSON, HOST: RECENTLY, THE HEALTH MINISTER FOR AFGHANISTAN VISITED WASHINGTON, D.C. HE STOPPED BY THE VA MEDICAL CENTER TO LEARN ABOUT SOME CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY AND TO MEET AN OLD FRIEND.

SCOTT WALLACE, REPORTING: WE DON'T OFTEN THINK ABOUT HEALTH CARE AS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY. BUT THIS MAN SURELY DOES.

MEET DOCTOR SAYED MOHAMMAD AMIN FATIMIE, AFGHANISTAN'S MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

DOCTOR FATIMIE IS FACING THE DAUNTING TASK OF CREATING A NATIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN AFGHANISTAN. EXPERTS BELIEVE THE MISSION IS CRUCIAL FOR AFGHANISTAN'S LONG-TERM STABILITY.

TO GET A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT A STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY, THE MINISTER TOURS THE VA'S MEDICAL CENTER IN WASHINGTON, DC, A FACILITY THAT RECEIVES MORE THAN A HALF-MILLION PATIENT VISITS A YEAR.

FRANCES MURPHY, MD, MPH, VA DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH: THE VA IS A GREAT MODEL FOR THE FUTURE OF AFGHANISTAN HEALTH CARE, BECAUSE IT'S A GOVERNMENT-RUN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM. I THINK IT IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF HOW A GOVERNMENT-RUN SYSTEM CAN REALLY SUCCEED.

WALLACE: DOCTOR FAMILIE GETS A LOOK AT THE VA'S ELECTRONIC RECORD SHARING AND TELEHEALTH SYSTEMS. IN THE MEDICAL CENTER'S PHARMACY, HE SEES PRESCRIPTIONS FILLED AUTOMATICALLY.

AND HE RECEIVES AN AWARD FROM CHIEF OF THE VA'S DENTAL SERVICES, DR. BOB FRAME.

SM AMIN FATIMIE, MD, AFGHANISTAN MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH: THIS IS A REALLY GREAT, VERY VALUABLE GIFT.

WALLACE: DR. FRAME WAS WOUNDED IN IRAQ IN 2003. BEFORE THAT, HE HELPED STAND UP THE AFGHAN HEALTH MINSTRY AFTER THE FALL

OF THE TALIBAN. AND HE ORGANIZED A DRIVE TO DONATE BOOKS TO KABUL'S MEDICAL LIBRARIES, RANSACKED BY THE EXTREMISTS.

ROBERT FRAME, DMD, VA ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY, DENTAL HEALTH: I THINK IT'S PRETTY POWERFUL THAT BOTH NATIONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COME TOGETHER, AND IT VALIDATES A LOT OF THE SERVICE THAT OUR MILITARY HAVE GIVEN OVER THERE, IN THAT THERE IS A PURPOSE, THERE IS A PLAN, THERE IS MORE THAN JUST SHOWING UP AND COMING HOME. THERE'S CONTINUITY, SO IT VALIDATES OUR SERVICE.

WALLACE: ALL MADE POSSIBLE, THE MINISTER SAYS, BY THE COURAGE AND SACRIFICE OF THE AMERICAN VETERANS WHO HAVE SERVED IN AFGHANISTAN.

FATIMIE: THEY ARE THE MESSENGERS OF LIBERTY, THEY ARE THE MESSENGERS OF FREEDOM. THEY ARE THE MESSENGERS OF DEMOCRACY. THEY ARE VERY BRAVE PEOPLE AND VERY BRAVE PERSONS. I AM PROUD OF THEM.

BENSON: FOUR HUNDRED THIRTY-THREE THOUSAND U.S. TROOPS HAVE SERVED IN AFGHANISTAN SINCE THE BEGINNING OF OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

FLU SEASON IS IN FULL SWING. IF YOU ARE A VETERAN, HERE IS SOME INFORMATION THAT MAY KEEP YOU HEALTHY:

FOR INFORMATION ON FLU PREVENTION, ENROLLED VETERANS SHOULD CALL 1-800-827-1000. ALL OTHERS SHOULD CALL 1-800-LUNG-USA (WHICH IS 1-800-5864-872). ON THE INTERNET, VISIT WWW.DOT.FLUCLINICLOCATOR.DOT.ORG

BENSON: WE CONTINUE OUR SERIES CELEBRATING VA'S SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE. THIS MONTH WE TAKE YOU TO DAYTON, OHIO, AND ONE OF THE ORIGINAL U.S. SOLDIER'S HOMES.

DANIELLE MCDAVIT, REPORTING: NUMEROUS SOLDIERS COMING HOME FROM THE CIVIL WAR STRUGGLED TO RETURN TO CIVILIAN LIFE -- AND NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THEIR INJURIES. SOME WERE UNEDUCATED AFRICAN-AMERICANS. OTHERS WERE BORN OUTSIDE THE U.S. AND NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO SETTLE IN.

PAUL LARUE, HISTORY TEACHER: MANY OF THESE MEN DID NOT HAVE THE KIND OF SUPPORT SYSTEM. THEY HAD COME HERE, THEY WEREN'T EVEN FIRST GENERATION. THEY WERE JUST OFF THE BOAT, INTO THE UNION ARMY, AND IF YOU GOT HURT IN THOSE DAYS YOU

KNOW YOU WERE TAKEN CARE OF BY YOUR FAMILY. AND FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF THESE MEN THERE WAS NO FAMILY.

MCDAVIT: SO, THE GOVERNMENT STEPPED IN TO BECOME A FAMILY FOR THOSE WHO DIDN'T HAVE ONE, CREATING A NETWORK OF ELEVEN HOMES INCLUDING ONE IN DAYTON, OHIO.

LARUE: THEY WERE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, ALTHOUGH THE DAYTON BRANCH WILL ALWAYS BE THE LARGEST.

MCDAVIT: IN ALL, THE DAYTON CAMPUS EVENTUALLY COVERED SIX HUNDRED TWENTY-SEVEN ACRES, COMPLETE WITH LIVING QUARTERS, HOSPITAL, LIBRARY AND CHAPEL

LARUE: THIS IS THE SOLDIERS CHAPEL. IT IS ONE OF THE EARLY BUILDINGS THAT ARE STILL ON CAMPUS TODAY. IT WAS WHERE THE FIRST SERVICES WERE HELD AND IT'S A WONDERFUL BUILDING ARCHITECTURALLY BECAUSE IT WAS MADE FROM LOCALLY QUARRIED LIMESTONE. THE LIMESTONE WAS QUARRIED HERE ON THE GROUNDS OF THE SOLDIERS HOME AND IT WAS DONE WITH HELP FROM THE SOLDIERS HERE AT THE SOLDIERS HOME.

MCDAVIT: ANOTHER EARLY STRUCTURE IS THE GATE LODGE, MADE OF THE SAME LIMESTONE, AND IN THE SAME STYLE AS THE CHAPEL.

LARUE: THIS WAS NOT THE MAIN ENTRANCE, BUT THIS WAS ONE OF THE PRIMARY ENTRANCES SO THERE WAS A SOLDIER ON DUTY HERE AT ALL TIMES, AND WOULD SALUTE THE VISITORS AND MEMBERS AS THEY WENT IN AND OUT OF THE FACILITY.

MCDAVIT: FOR IT'S TIME, THE DAYTON HOME WAS CONSIDERED PROGRESSIVE. USING THE PHILOSOPHY THAT EXERCISE AND FRESH AIR WOULD IMPROVE A VETERAN'S HEALTH AND WELL BEING.

A GLASS-DOMED CONSERVATORY HELD TROPICAL TREES, WHILE SHADE WAS PROVIDED BY A GROTTO WHICH STILL STANDS TODAY.

LARUE: THESE WERE NOT MEN THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO BE JUST COOPED UP IN BARRACKS, AND SO YOU SEE MANY FABULOUS OLD PICTURES OF THE SOLDIERS STROLLING THE GROUNDS AND SITTING BY THE PONDS.

MCDAVIT: WITH ALL IT'S BEAUTY, IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE VISITORS FROM NEAR AND FAR WOULD BE DRAWN TO THE HOME.

LARUE: THIS BECAME ONE OF THE MAJOR TOURIST DESTINATIONS WEST OF THE ALLEGANY MOUNTAINS.

MCDAVIT: COMPLETE WITH A HOTEL AND RESTAURANT, ATTRACTING THOUSANDS OF VISITORS EACH YEAR.

LARUE: PEOPLE JUST CAME OUT TO SEE WHAT THERE WAS TO SEE. THIS REALLY WAS A VERY -- BECAUSE OF THE PROGRESSIVE SOLDIERS HOME -- IT REALLY BECOMES A TOURIST DESTINATION.

MCDAVIT: THE HOME WAS RUN MILITARY STYLE. MEN WERE ISSUED BLUE UNIFORMS AND LOOSELY FOLLOWED ARMY REGULATIONS. BUGLES AND CANNONS SIGNED DAILY SCHEDULES.

LARUE: YOU'RE STANDING IN FRONT OF THE GAZEBO, OR BANDSTAND. AND IT WAS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE THEY WOULD FORM UP FOR REVIEW AND THEY WOULD HAVE THE MILITARY BAND AND THEY WOULD DO THOSE THINGS OTHER SOLDIERS DO AND THIS WAS THE PLACE WHERE THEY DID IT.

MCDAVIT: TODAY, WHILE SOME OF THE SCENERY REMAINS THE SAME, THE NATIONAL SOLDIERS HOME HAS EVOLVED INTO THE DAYTON VA MEDICAL CENTER, PROVIDING ADVANCED HEALTH CARE TO THOUSANDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR COUNTRY.

LAWRENCE TUCKER, STAFF ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR, DAYTON, VA MEDICAL CENTER: WE HERE AT DAYTON ARE PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO BALANCE THOSE TWO THINGS TOGETHER: PROVIDE MODERN MEDICAL CARE FOR THE VETERAN AND FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN HISTORY, AN HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF VETERANS CARE. WE PROVIDE THAT AS WELL.

MCDAVIT: WITH IT'S ACCOMPLISHED PAST, THE DAYTON, VA MEDICAL CENTER IS CONFIDENT IT HAS A PROMISING FUTURE.

BENSON: TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT 75ANNIVERSARY DOT VA DOT GOV.

THAT WRAPS UP ANOTHER EDITION OF THE AMERICAN VETERAN. IT IS OUR HONOR TO BRING YOU THESE STORIES EACH MONTH. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS REGARDING OUR SHOW OR FOR ANY OTHER REASON, HERE ARE A FEW WAYS TO DO SO: VISIT YOUR NEAREST VET CENTER OR CALL 1-800-827-1000. ON THE INTERNET, VISIT WWW DOT VA GOV

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, I'M JIM BENSON. SEE  
YOU NEXT TIME.

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